



Misconduct and Academic Appeal Cases 2013-14

Student Misconduct

The policy on Student Discipline, approved by University Council and University Senate in 2012, provides a framework of principles for dealing with student misconduct in both academic and non-academic matters.

Academic Misconduct

2013-14 statistics:

Number of academic misconduct cases heard by colleges:

20 allegations involving 20 students

(Previous year: 35 allegations involving 34 students)

Number of students found guilty:

18 students (two overturned on appeal)

Breakdown of allegations:

Plagiarism: 15 Other types of cheating: 5

Penalties:

Expulsion: none

Suspensions: two (but one nullified on appeal)

Other penalties:

- In most cases the student was given zero in the assignment or exam, plus an additional penalty of 3 to 15 per cent off the final grade.
- One reassessed exam reverted back to its original grade
- One grade of fail for the relevant course

One appeal was made to the Office of the University Secretary to appeal the college finding of academic misconduct. The finding was overturned and the penalty was reduced from a suspension to a note on the student's transcript, a zero in the assignment, and an additional penalty of 3 per cent off the final grade.

Analysis:

As faculty become more experienced with using the informal and formal procedures under the new policy, the number of plagiarism cases reported for a college hearing has been declining compared to historical levels, likely because many are now being handled directly by faculty through the informal procedure..

Non-academic misconduct

A total of five formal complaints were lodged with the university secretary (compared to ten cases the previous year).

One complaint was sent to an alternative dispute resolution team (ADR) and was successfully resolved. One resulted in a Presidential Suspension which was lifted on appeal to the Senate Hearing Board, and replaced with conduct restrictions.

One complaint was withdrawn. Two cases went to a formal hearing of the Senate Hearing Board. One case was dismissed. One student was found to have violated the standard for student conduct. The outcome included conduct probation.

Academic appeals

University procedures for academic appeals provide for appeals from students who feel they have been disadvantaged in their academic standing by an unfair judgment of their work or by unfair college or university processes. In January 2012, University Council approved an overall policy on Student Appeals of Evaluation, Grading and Academic Standing which lays out the principles which the university follows in dealing with student appeals.

Procedures for dealing with student appeals remain similar to those used in the past. Two forms used by departments for mark review and exam re-read have been consolidated into a single form. As well, the Governance Committee of Council no longer reviews appeal applications to determine whether they should proceed to hearing; all appeals now proceed to a hearing.

The Office of the University Secretary received three appeals in 2013-14. All were dismissed when the University Appeal Board determined that the assessment or faculty action had been based on substantive academic judgement and was not affected by unfair procedures.